

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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***FORMER RICHMOND COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPUTIES  
SENTENCED FOR FEDERAL DRUG TRAFFICKING  
CONVICTIONS***

AUGUSTA – Rick Thompson, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Georgia, announced today that RALPH TYRONE WILLIAMS, age 36, and JOSEPH ELLICK, age 34, were sentenced in U.S. District Court in Augusta by Chief U.S. District Judge Dudley H. Bowen, Jr. for their convictions of drug trafficking crimes.

Under the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, Chief Judge Bowen sentenced WILLIAMS to serve 292 months in federal prison, followed by 5 years on supervised release. ELLICK was sentenced to serve 57 months in federal prison, followed by 3 years on supervised release.

The sentencings followed the defendants' convictions by a jury in September, 2002. WILLIAMS was convicted of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute and distribution of more than 50 grams of crack cocaine, in violation of Title 21 United States Code Sections 846 and 841(b)(1)(A) and of conspiracy to interfere with commerce by threats in violation of Title 18 United States Code Section 1951. ELLICK was convicted of attempt to possess with intent to distribute cocaine, in violation of Title 21 United States Code Sections 846 and 841(b)(1)(C).

Mr. Thompson praised the efforts of Assistant U. S. Attorneys J. Michael Faulkner and Lee H. Little, who tried the case on behalf of the government, and of Special Agents John Parrish of the F.B.I., and Patrick Clayton of the D.E.A., who investigated the case. Thompson also thanked Richmond County Sheriff Ronnie Strength for his department's cooperation throughout the investigation and prosecution of the former deputies.

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